

REGULAR MEETING-MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL-APRIL 11, 2005

Mayor Elizabeth Paterson called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:34 p.m. in the Council Chamber of the Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Blair, Clouette, Haddad, Hawkins, Koehn, Paterson, Paulhus, Redding, Schaefer

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Blair moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded to approve three sets of minutes: Special meeting March 28, Regular meeting March 28, 2005 and Special meeting of March 30, 2005. There was a correction in the March 30 minutes to reflect the fact that Mr. Dautrich was not sure if those surveyed included persons in the apartment complexes. So noted and corrected.

Motion so passed unanimously.

III. MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Paterson requested a moment of silence to remember all those serving in uniform abroad.

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Ms. Linda Sabatelli, one of the Town of Mansfield's representatives to the Regional Board of Education, urged the Council to support the Region's Budget at the Referendum on May 3, 2005. The Board has heard the concerns about costs in this year's budgets from all three participating towns. The Board has responded with a reduction of \$245,000. This budget would be a 5.1% increase instead of 6.7% as originally presented.

Ms. Alison Demers, a Junior University of Connecticut student spoke about the HEART program at the University. This is a program for information and assistance with problems of substance abuse. This program services students from a home on Gilbert Road. The University has told the director and members of this program that the house will be demolished and that they needed to be relocated somewhere else on campus. Ms. Demers is concerned as to the relocation plans. The house now offers a non-threatening place to discuss this issue, and she asked for support in finding a suitable location.

The Mayor has spoken with the University administration about this issue.

V. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Fiscal Year 2005/06 Proposed Budget

Ms. Carol Pellegrine, 269 Clover Mill Road, inquired as to whom does the Finance Director represent with contracts and negotiations between the Town, the Region

and the Board of Education? The Town Manager answered that although the Director of Finance may be present at times, all negotiations are done by the Town Manager. The Contract regarding the Reynolds School was negotiated between Supt. Silva and the Town Manager.

Ms. Lesley Sweeney, 317 Mount Hope Road, spoke against the full day kindergarten as presented by the Board of Education. She feels that half-day is best for the children. She was concerned about the cost and additional space for this program. She suggested that parents pay for the other half day, and children who need the extra teaching time should be free.

Mr. Al Cyr, Bone Mill Road, representing the Agriculture Committee, the Committee for Open Space, the Conservation Commission, and the Parks Advisory Committee, read a letter, which supports open space and is on page 155 of the packet.

Ms. Leslie Turner, a Mansfield Resident, could not attend the meeting, but sent a letter regarding full day kindergarten. She is not in favor of full day kindergarten. See attached letter.

At 8:06 p.m. the hearing on the budget closed.

2. An Ordinance Establishing a Division of Fire and Emergency Services

Mr. Richard Pellegrine, 269 Clover Mill Road, supports the ordinance but would like the Council to enact a few minor changes.

Insert "shall be appointed by the Town AS Director of Public Safety" and the other change is the word "may" include not only career personnel but also volunteer personnel. That word "MAY" is too permissive and we need to encourage volunteers. Costs in later years are of concern to him.

Hearing closed at 8:15 p.m.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

3. An Ordinance Establishing a Division of Fire and Emergency Services

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Schaefer seconded that effective April 11, 2005, to adopt "An Ordinance Establishing a Division of Fire and Emergency Services" as revised by staff in its draft dated April 11, 2005, and which ordinance shall become effective 21 days after publication in a newspaper having circulation within the Town of Mansfield.

Motion so passed. Ms. Blair reclused herself.

Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to move item 10 under new business up in the agenda.

So passed unanimously.

10. Presentation re: Reynolds School Project

Mr. Bruce Silva, Superintendent of Regional School District #19 handed out the attached information regarding the Reynolds School Project. The Reynolds School, located on Depot Road, would allow for the expansion of educational services and increase programming options for a small number of regular and educationally handicapped students. The State will provide reimbursement for the project at a rate of 83.4%. The Regional School District will hold a public hearing on the project in the next few months.

No vote necessary.

4. Issues Regarding the UConn Landfill, Including the UConn Consent Order, Public Participation Relative to the Consent and Well Testing

Attached were the new correspondence concerning the UConn landfill, this included the Quarterly progress report for Jan-March 2005. UConn is waiting for some state and federal permits.

No action necessary.

5. Appointment of Auditor to Conduct Annual Financial Audit for Fiscal Year 2004/05.

Mr. Schaefer moved and Ms. Blair seconded that effective April 11, 2005, to appoint the firm of Kostin, Ruffkess and Company to conduct the Town of Mansfield's financial audit for fiscal year 2004/05, with the understanding that the current audit team will be replaced.

So passed unanimously.

6. Clean Energy

Council member Koehn handed out more information about Smart Power. The Town Manager urged that this item be tabled.

Mr. Paulhus moved and Ms. Blair seconded to table this topic to the next meeting.

So passed unanimously.

7. Sustainability

Council members read information given by Town Staff. Council member Koehn urged that there be created an ad hoc committee on Sustainability. Council by consensus agreed that staff would move forward to prioritize various initiatives relating to sustainability. Council member Koehn said she would be willing to work on this issue.

8. Application(s) to Department of Economic and Community Development for Small Cities Program Funds

Mr. Clouette moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded that effective April 11, 2005, to authorize staff to proceed with the preparation of a pre-application to the Small Cities

Community Development Program to provide funding to establish a business incubator project in partnership with the University of Connecticut, and to utilize \$60,000 in Housing Rehabilitation Program income to fund the accessibility project at the Mansfield Housing Authority.

So passed unanimously.

9. University Spring Weekend and Campus/Community Relations
To be discussed with item #12 under New Business.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

10. Presentation re: Reynolds School Project

Already presented earlier in meeting.

11. An Act Concerning a Property Tax Exemption for Certain Farm Buildings

Mr. Haddad moved and Ms. Blair seconded that effective April 11, 2005, to refer consideration of the property tax exemption detailed in Public Act 03-234, "An Act Concerning a Property Tax Exemption for Certain Farm Buildings," to the agriculture and open space advisory committees to review and comment.

So passed unanimously.

12. Committee on Community Quality of Life

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Hawkins seconded to schedule a public hearing at 7:30 p.m. at the town council's regular meeting on April 25, 2005, to solicit public comment regarding the report issued by the committee on community quality of life.

So passed unanimously.

13. Eminent Domain Authorization-Separatist Road Easements

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Hawkins seconded that effective April 11, 2005, to authorize staff to acquire by eminent domain two easements described by the director of public works in his correspondence dated April 7, 2005 that are necessary to complete the Separatist Road Bikeway Project.

After discussion with Mr. Lon Hultgren, Director of Public Works, and the Town Manager, Mr. Berliner, the following motion was made:

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Hawkins seconded to table this issue, to give Mr. Hultgren more time to reach agreement with landowners.

In favor: Blair, Clouette, Haddad, Hawkins, Koehn, Redding, Schaefer
Against: Paterson, Paulhus

Motion so passed.

Ms. Koehn moved and Mr. Schaefer seconded to add to the agenda 13a "University space for Heart Program"

So passed unanimously.

13a. University Space for the Heart Program

After discussion, Ms. Koehn withdrew her motion to send a letter to the University regarding space issue of Heart Program. Mayor Paterson said she would be speaking with people perhaps at the Town/Gown meeting, as substance abuse is a topic of great concern for the Town especially with Spring Weekend approaching.

VIII. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

IX. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

X. REPORTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Paterson reminded Council about September 25, 2005 "Festival on the Green" 12noon to 4 p.m.

XI. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

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The Town/Gown meeting is postponed until April 18, 2005.

The Town Council will meet on the 13th for Budget Discussions in Room C at 6:30 p.m. Revised agenda was handed out.

The Town Manager handed out letter written by Mr. John Jackman, Director of Emergency Management, regarding raised bill No. 6964 An Act Concerning Liability for use of an Automatic External Defibrillator. This is a proposed amendment to CHG intended to provide protection against ordinary liability to anyone who uses an AED to provide emergency assistance to a person in need.

Jeff Beadle, Director of Veteran Administration, sent further information to the Council.

Growth and taxable grand list over the last ten years, is in the budget on page 261.

Handed out information re: Median Values by ranges of values of houses. Staff will be looking at Elderly Circuit Breaker. Cannot do anything for houses owned by persons under 65.

There is no way to tell the ages of peoples who own houses.

The Town Manager handed out the new amount requested by Regional School District #19.

The Town Manager explained housing/assessment.

Rep. Merrill spoke with the Town Manager, there is hopefully additional money coming from the PILOT and the Mash/Pequot Funds.

The Tax Collector is retiring in mid June, and we cannot wait too long to set the mill rate. We need to set the mill rate as early as possible so she may assist the new Collector in sending out the tax bills.

XII. FUTURE AGENDAS

Earth Day.

XIII. PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

14. Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development re: Affordable Housing Appeals Procedure List

15. Ashford Planning and Zoning Commission re: Public Hearing for 9-month Residential Subdivision Moratorium

16. A. Cyr re: Comments in Support of a New Bond Referendum in the Fall of 2005 for Open Space Acquisition

17. R. Favretti re: Democratic Town Committee Action to Fill PZC Vacancy

18. Governor J. Rell re: Connecticut Convention Center

19. Downtown Partnership re: Save the Date-Festival on the Green

20. Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding re: CCJEF Conference

21. Connecticut State Library and Connecticut Library Association re: National Library Workers Day

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Not needed.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:10 p.m. Mr. Paulhus moved and Ms. Blair seconded to adjourn the meeting.

So passed unanimously.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor

Joan E. Gerdson, Town Clerk